

Growing Together Nebraska (GTN) 2021 Impact Report



Increasing access to fresh produce



GARDEN COLLECTION PROJECT

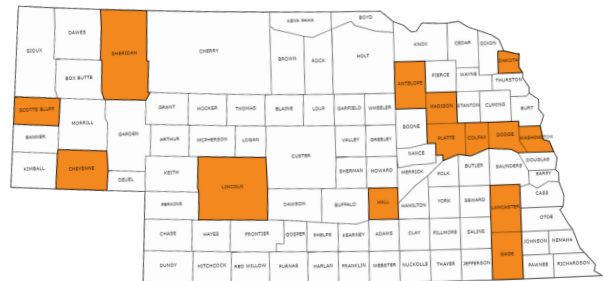
Growing Together Nebraska (GTN) is a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) donation garden project that increases access to fresh fruits and vegetables, promotes healthy food access, and provides nutrition and gardening education to individuals and families living with limited resources. SNAP-Ed, the Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program (EMGV), and food pantries are working together to build and maintain donation gardens in their communities. Nebraska's efforts feed into a Growing Together multi-state (Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Montana, Wisconsin and Wyoming) SNAP-Ed project.

FRESH PRODUCE

For the sixth consecutive year, Nebraska Extension's SNAP-Ed program awarded funding to communities across the state through its GTN project. Across 14 county sites, 48,328 pounds (144,985 servings) of produce were donated to 75 local emergency food distribution sites that served 14,458 Nebraskans living with limited resources. Produce donations were valued at \$66,767.

Statewide Impact:

22 Gardens Across 14 Counties



48,328 pounds = 144,985 servings of fresh fruits & vegetables



48,328

pounds of fruits and vegetables donated to **75 emergency food distribution sites**

14,458

individuals living with limited resources received fresh produce



214

volunteers, including 51 Extension Master Gardener Volunteers, contributed over **6,700 hours** to the project, valued at more than \$177,800

Meeting a Need in Local Communities

The Dodge County GTN team completed their third year of growing and donating fresh produce to individuals and families living with limited resources in Fremont. Lisa O'Connell, an Extension Master Gardener Volunteer in the community, helps coordinate volunteers and actively seeks support from local partners.

Lisa shared, "The gardens have made a huge impact in the Fremont community. 2021 [was] an awesome season, as we provided produce to families who can't afford healthy and fresh produce."

Important aspects of this three-year project include raised beds, over 2,600 pounds of fresh produce donated to 1,300 individuals, volunteer engagement, nutrition education and food demonstrations. Additionally, the support of local community partners is key to the project's continued success.

The raised beds improve access and inclusivity for all who wish to be involved, including young adults with disabilities who find therapeutic and skill-building benefits through volunteering with this project.

Looking to the future, Dodge County GTN hopes to recruit additional youth volunteers, increase produce rescue efforts, explore new partnerships and expand education opportunities.



"The gardens have made a huge impact in the Fremont community. 2021 has been an awesome season, as we provided produce to families who can't afford healthy and fresh produce. We have donated to new places that were grateful for the fresh produce. Along with the produce, we provide education and healthy recipes."

-Lisa O'Connell, Dodge County EMGV